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Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP79R00904A001400030002-4

18 April 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

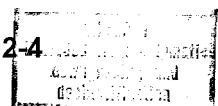
SUBJECT: President's Remarks on Strategic Estimates

1. In the course of his statements to the press on the Safeguard ABM decision, the President indicated that it was related to a change in our estimates. He stated: "I analyzed the nature of the threat. I found, for example, that ever since the decision to deploy the ABM System called Sentinel in 1967 that the intelligence estimates indicated that the Soviet capabilities with regard to their SS-9s, their nuclear missiles, was 60 per cent higher than we thought then; that their plans for nuclear submarines were 60 per cent greater than we had thought then."

2. At 1630 today we received a call from Bill Hyland (formerly with ONE and now with the NSC Staff) who wished to explain what the President had meant. The President, he said, had not been talking about the NIEs but about the projections in the NIPPs; and he had not meant the size of the present Soviet forces (as his statement might have indicated), but of the forces in 1974.

3. This approach was intended to show that the situation facing the Nixon administration (as forecast in national intelligence) differed substantially from that facing the Johnson administration at the time of the Sentinel ABM decision in September 1967. Accordingly, the projections of SS-9 and Polaris-type submarines in Section I of NIPP-69 were contrasted with those in NIPP-67, presumably on the theory that NIPP-67 provided the intelligence base for the Sentinel decision. We do not know why the year 1974 was selected or why only these two weapon systems were considered. At any rate, here

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are the projections for mid-1974:

	<u>NIPP-67</u>	<u>NIPP-69</u>
SS-9	156-180	234-246
Polaris-type submarines	17-25 ^{a/}	20-37 ^{b/}

a/ With 8 or more tubes
b/ With 16 tubes

ABBOT SMITH
Director
National Estimates

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